

Now, in responding to them, I've often discussed a piece of legislation that's very important to the debate on budget priorities and the so-called "fiscal cliff"; that's the Sequestration Transparency Act. This bill passed the Budget Committee by voice vote and was later approved in the House, with only two in opposition. After the Senate passed it with unanimous consent, the President signed it into law. So this was truly a bipartisan effort, a statement by almost every one of us working together that we're concerned about the impact that sequestration might have on our constituents, and an effort to get more information about the true harm that that sequestration will cause.

Now, following the administration's recent report detailing those cuts that would come under sequestration, I am even more concerned than before, and my constituents are concerned. And I know constituents all across this country are concerned as well. Mr. Speaker, there is bipartisan concern about the impact that sequestration might have, and yet we haven't been able to come to a bipartisan consensus to avoid it.

We've identified a problem; now we must identify a solution. This should be a balanced solution, working together, and I look forward to working with all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to arrive at that solution. It's a solution for my district in Oregon, for all of the great State, and, importantly, for all of this great Nation.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

Rabbi Steven Weil, Orthodox Union, New York, New York, offered the following prayer:

Master of the Universe, today we stand before You in this hallowed Hall, grateful for the freedoms we have been granted here, grateful for the men and women in this room who You imbued with wisdom and blessed with the courage to make the difficult decisions that will impact the destiny of all humanity.

Allow the Members of Congress to be Your partners in making a more perfect world, and grant them the insight and the vision to always be mindful of the responsibilities they bear. We implore You to guide and strengthen

them so that they can do what must be done to save the world from those who wish to perpetrate terrorism and evil.

Dear God, enable them to do what must be done to plant the seeds for a brighter and more prosperous economic future. Dear God, support them in providing our children with a strong education to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Thank You for giving us such wonderful shepherds and allowing us to be their cherished flock.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

#### VOICE OF TEXAS: ELIZABETH FROM HOUSTON, TEXAS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth from Houston wrote me this about her business:

My immigrant parents came to the United States legally. They had to learn English. My dad worked very hard. He opened several bars and restaurants, hired wait staff, cooks, bartenders, and cleaning people. There was never a dime of government assistance. Hard work, long hours, and sleepless nights were the norm for all of us. I learned their work ethic early, and I also have worked very hard for my family. No welfare, no government handouts.

This is my country, and I love this country as much as my parents did. But I do not respect the current President or his administration. They want to be in charge of all of us, from cradle to grave. That is not the American way. That is exactly what my parents and grandparents fled from. Please take us back to the right way.

Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth's family did it the right way—and without Big Government getting in the way. They built their American Dream all on their own.

And that's just the way it is.

#### ALL THE APPEARANCES OF A SWINDLE

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Did Peabody Energy Company deliberately unload a bad investment on public power organizations serving 217 cities and villages across the Midwest? Congress must find out because Peabody Energy lured public power organizations into contracts that forced municipal utilities to pay up to twice the market rate for electricity. At a time when private funding could not be had for new coal-fired utilities, Peabody Energy unloaded 95 percent of its investment onto public power customers in what became an almost triple cost overrun, with a coal mine that lasts 22 years, instead of 30 years as promised, and an ashfill that was supposed to last 23 years, and will last only 12 to 14 years.

The contract which municipals are tied into forces them to pay for power 42 percent above the market rate, whether the plant is producing energy or not. Billions of dollars were issued for bond financing for the project, and utility customers are vulnerable to huge costs for debt retirement. Wall Street wouldn't invest in the project, so Peabody went to Main Street, and now millions of public power customers will pay sky-high electric rates in what has all the appearances of a swindle.

#### SEQUESTRATION TRANSPARENCY REPORT SHOWS LACK OF LEADERSHIP

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the administration released a report on how the President plans to implement the \$600 billion defense sequester, threatening service-members, military families, and veterans. Politico explained it "shed little new light on the sword of Damocles." This report, required by the passage of the Sequestration Transparency Act, arrived 1 week late, confirming that the President and the liberal-controlled Senate have refused to take sequestration as a top priority.

Today, the House Armed Services Committee held a hearing to receive testimony from key government officials who will implement sequestration. Based upon the minimal information provided, it's clear the administration has not made appropriate plans for the drastic budget cuts, even though the White House is responsible for proposing the disastrous proposal. House Republicans have voted five times, led by Chairman BUCK McKEON, to replace sequestration with commonsense reforms to avoid the threat to national security or destroying jobs. I urge the President and the Senate to begin working with the House before it's too late.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism.